

## FRACTIONAL CURRENCY COLLECTOR'S BOARD

# April 1994 Newsletter

The Memphis Annual Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, June 18, 1994, at the Memphis Tennessee, Civic Center during the 1994 Memphis Coin Show. Actual time and physical location will be listed in the Show Schedule and Bulletin Boards. We need a good turnout to handle the votes and decisions on the meeting agenda.

Your Executive committee has met via mail and telephone during the interim from the last Annual Meeting. The basic questions covered and decided by consensus are listed below. The action of the committee requires your vote at the annual meeting. If you will not be present and desire to express your opinion, please write President Hales at 3810 Eric Court, Lakeland, FL 33813, prior to June 1, 1994. The propositions discussed are listed below:-

1) Our current stock of full blown "Encyclopedias" is down to 21 copies. Under normal circumstances we average 20 new members a year. When Bolin is going full blast as he did last year, he can reach 30 new members.

Proposal:- Simply update the text and have another 100 photocopies made for new member distribution.

2) A major current problem is simply the Laws of Economics. We have always known the new member packages were a loss operation, but felt that inducing new members to join was the way to go. But the cost of a new member has risen to between \$9.75 and \$10.95!

Proposal:- Increase the new member fee to \$10.00.

3) I (Milt Friedberg) finally have received permission from Ira Friedberg to use The Friedberg Numbering System in the "Simplified Edition of the Encyclopedia of Fractional and Postal Currency". A lot of good input was received from the Memphis '93 meeting and I have made a series of revisions and corrections to the manuscript. Frankly, I am quite pleased with the result... It currently is ready to go. A final copy is attached for your study, comments and Memphis decisions as to what happens to it next.

Proposal:- What do we do now?

(Continued on Page 2)

4) Dues are a problem. We have been issuing four "Newsletters" a year at an average cost of \$2.00 each including photocopying, postage and supplies.

4) Proposal:- Raise Annual Dues to \$15.00.

5) A major reduction in cost could be accomplished by obtaining a non-profit status for the FCCB, which would allow us to slash our postage costs. In our founding years with just 50 members, a cursory look at the process to secure the non-profit status was deemed a waste of time and money. NO LONGER TRUE!

5) Proposal:- President Hales is studying the problem and will report at the Memphis meeting.

6) The Executive group has authorized the payment of a fulfillment fee to have the mailings of our "Newsletters" done by others than our volunteers who have run out of availability...

#### NOW ON TO OTHER MATTERS.

Attached you will find an order form for the 1994 Fractional Currency Box with the 50c Spinner as the top steel etching. Karl Bertlesen, the vendor, swears that his EPA, move and production problems are over... Send in your order and find out with the rest of us!

Attached is a copy of a short article on Encased Postage copied from "Linn's Stamp News" of 3/21/94, which should be of interest.

Also attached is a reproduced article from "Linn's", 2/28/94 on how to best care for our collections

Member Bob Laub has written regarding a club table at various shows. The letter is reproduced for your information and as a suggestion that you, too, might write your ideas and forward them for the benefit of the members. President Hales was intrigued by member Laub's letter and has appointed him chairman of the Show Table Committee.

I have attached a description of a book about Engraver's that some members might like to add to their Libraries. I have not seen or inspected the book, but the description is enticing.

Member M. Gengerke has unearthed some interesting autographed notes. Descriptions to be added to your "Encyclopedia" and illustrations are attached.

I have been in correspondence with author Brent Hughes. He has just finished up a series of Fractional Currency Articles. They will start appearing in the commercial literature very shortly.

Milt Friedberg, Vice President

P.S. Sorry, that I can't join you in Memphis this year, but do enjoy!!!

# These stamps masqueraded as coins

There are connections between the hobbies of philately and numismatics that fall neatly into either field. Some of these links are made of

currency.

Four small paper bills appeared, a 5¢, 10¢, 25¢ and 50¢, each having engraved on the face pictures of postage

1861 ranged in value from the 1¢ to 90¢, these privately issued coins were superior to the postage currency. Gault's enterprise was not intended to

other hotels did not, simply because people knew they could get change for their gold coins. Among the rarest of these found today are those featuring the imprint of clothier Arthur M. Claflin, as shown in the illustration.

The coin shortages of our Civil War even spread to Canada: The firm of Weir and Larminie in Montreal gave Gault an order, knowing full well that the stamps in each "coin" had no value there.

These "encased postage stamps," as they are called, are quite rare, and in really fine condition, with the brass bright, the letters sharp and the mica unbroken, one can be worth \$1,000 or more.

It is interesting to note that after World War I, when Germany's system of currency broke down entirely, that country resorted to these same stratagems to enable business to be conducted.

German encased stamps are quite common, since, as inflation continued and until the currency was entirely debased, millions were issued. ■

## Point of View

By Herman Herst Jr.

paper, some of metal.

During the Civil War, metal coinage ceased to circulate. The Confederacy never did issue any coins; a 50¢ piece was contemplated, and a few samples were made, but none were ever issued.

This may seem untrue to many people who believe they own one, but the coin was extensively counterfeited just after the war. Actually it was a Yankee half-dollar, with the words "United States of America" on the back replaced by "Confederate States of America."

After the Continental currency debacle in the 1780s, when paper money was rendered worthless by reprinting (thereby, "not worth a Continental"), the federal government was forbidden by law ever to issue paper money, although many private banks did.

In 1861, with business at a virtual standstill, due to an inability to make change, the government decided to issue paper money, backed by postage stamps rather than



A copy of United States Scott 59 can be seen through the clear-mica front of this brass case. Encased postage stamps like these, with advertising on the reverse, were sometimes used as small change during the Civil War.

stamps for which they could be exchanged at the post office. Few were exchanged. Rather they circulated as currency, with wide acceptance.

They were redeemed after the war and taken from circulation, although to this day, Uncle Sam still accepts them as valid currency. They are not particularly rare, even today, even when in perfect, crisp, unfolded condition.

Taking a leaf from Uncle Sam's book, a chap named John Gault conceived the idea of enclosing a postage stamp in a brass round holder, the size of a quarter, with transparent mica on the face disclosing the face value of the stamp.

Since the stamps in use in

be without compensation.

On the obverse of the "coins," he sold advertising to 34 different firms, offering everything from hats to patent medicines. Lord and Taylor, the New York department store, ordered eight different values including the 90¢, and jumped the gun on its competition.

The Irving House Hotel in New York had guests when

# Museum curator has tips collectors can use

Linn's is frequently asked for advice on practical measures the collector can take to protect and safeguard cherished stamps and covers.

One man who knows a great deal about that subject is Douglas N. Muir, curator of philately at Britain's National Postal Museum. The museum was profiled by Larry Rosenblum in the Great Britain column in Linn's Feb. 14 issue (page 16).

Muir offers some user-friendly but thoroughly professional insights on the preservation of philatelic materials in the December issue of *The London Philatelist*, the journal of the Royal Philatelic Society of London.

Muir notes that collectors have a luxury that museums do not, in that they can store their collections in virtually perpetual darkness. Museums must put material on display.

To serve that function, however, Muir says the NPM has developed the following guidelines:

"Light: not in excess of 50 lux, nor exposed to concentration of ultraviolet light in excess of 75 µw/lumen (micro watts of ultraviolet light per lumen of overall light);

"Air Temperature: stable between 18°C and 20°C;

"Relative Humidity: stable between 45 percent and 55 percent."

Stability, Muir notes, is the key thing. For the collector,

temperature and humidity can vary somewhat from these standards provided that they are kept constant, and are not subject to considerable or frequent changes.

As to light, Muir remarks, "Over a period, no matter how restricted the conditions, light will affect a paper item." For stamps and covers regularly stored in closed and properly maintained albums, however, light should not be a problem.

"Clearly, for most collectors common sense would ensure that their items are not exposed to sunlight, nor kept in excessively dry or humid conditions. Over 65 percent relative humidity, mould is likely to grow on paper; below 40 percent the paper, media and gum may embrittle."

Having set standards for what might be characterized as the outer environment, Muir turns his attention to what could be called the inner environment — the materials, mounts, pages and albums that stamps and covers touch or are adjacent to in storage.

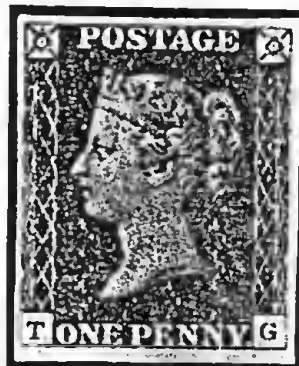
"All items that could come into contact, in any way, with the stamps must be acid-free and of archival quality," writes Muir. "This means not only album pages and protectors but mounts, backing paper, and binders and slip-in cases..."

"The first requirement is

that all materials used in conservation should be at least neutral (pH 7.0) but preferably mildly alkaline (pH 8.0-8.5)."

Muir observes that seven years ago the NPM "discovered to our chagrin" that old album pages and backing paper was acidic and had fugitive dyes. The museum began remounting its collection:

"Paper used for the album pages is now...highly re-



Early stamps printed on handmade papers, like Britain's 1840 Penny Black, are likely to endure the passing years better than later issues on comparatively acidic papers made by machine.

finer, high alpha cellulose; acid-free with a pH of 8.5; light fast with a blue wool scale reading of 5; buffered with calcium carbonate; tub-sized/pure non-ionic farina starch; and Fourdrinier machine-made with a vellum finish. This is rather a mouth-

ful for most and in any case the pages are printed specifically for the Museum...

"The album-page protectors are made from...archival and totally inert polyester (type 516, which has no static). This often goes under the trade name of Melinex."

For the collector, meeting the general requirements — acid-free paper of archival quality and chemically stable clear mounts with no plasticizers — is more important than seeking a specific brand (especially since the ones he mentions are available chiefly in the United Kingdom).

Muir suggests that collectors firmly seek specific assurances from suppliers that storage materials meet these standards before they buy.

He also notes a special risk for the use of plastic mounts under semitropical conditions: keeping paper in contact with any plastic carries a risk of mold growth in high humidity or with fluctuating temperatures, due to condensation.

Speaking of the immediate environment, Muir adds, "Ash and nicotine can stain, if nothing else, and all smoking is banned in the Museum."

"Rather as spillable items like coffee cups should be kept well away from stamps, so cigarettes or pipes might be kept for pleasant contemplation of a task when it has been completed."

Not all threats to stamps

and covers are external. Some, Muir observes, arise from the very paper on which philatelic items were printed:

"Earlier papers were made by hand, and traditionally were 'sized' with gelatine. Sizing was to make the paper water-repellent. Paper-makers sometimes also added aluminium potassium sulphate (alum) to gelatine to make it harden."

"However, from the mid-19th century with machine-made papers the aluminum potassium sulphate was combined with rosin (as used with violin bows) instead of gelatine. With this alum rosin the alum breaks down to give sulphuric acid which, of course, causes paper to deteriorate. It was used in machine-made papers from the mid-19th century right up to the 1960s and can therefore be a cause for concern."

"All early stamps, Penny Blacks, etc., are on handmade paper but later Victorian ones are on machine-made paper. Several are also printed with particularly sensitive inks which can easily fade if exposed to light."

Muir discusses the appropriate treatment for a valued but deteriorating item:

"The general advice that would be given in such circumstances is to do nothing yourself other than remove any external agent that might be causing further deterioration. If treatment is needed,

for foxing or deacidification for example, then this must be done by a paper conservator. This can prove expensive, unfortunately, so only important items can in practice be considered for this.

"In essence, I would sum up by reiterating a few points that are simple and practical."

"1. Keep all material in stable, reasonable atmospheric conditions."

"2. Only use conservation quality materials for mounting, i.e., album pages, protectors, mounts, binders, slip-in cases, etc."

"3. Always ask if manufactured products are archivally sound. If necessary demand that they label them accordingly and guarantee that they are of conservation quality."

"4. With important items which are damaged or deteriorating ask the advice of a paper conservator."

Muir concludes by noting that our understanding of ways in which to preserve philatelic materials and techniques to forestall their deterioration is by no means static:

"We shall continue to conduct research at the National Postal Museum, for instance into the lasting properties of early phosphors and modern papers with different coatings. The results will be published in our annual reviews."

"Reports by [NPM paper conservator] Catherine Rick-

man have appeared in each of our reviews from 1988 to date with the most recent for 1992 being available from the British Philatelic Bureau for the princely sum of £5." The address of the Bureau is: 10, St. Andrew's Place, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, Scotland. For information about the Royal Philatelic Society journal, *The London Philatelist*, write to George E. Barker, 13

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1/26/94

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Dear Benny,

I am writing to you, and the membership of the FCCB about an idea I recently had. In order to attract new members I would like to see the Club have an information table set up at Memphis, maybe even St. Louis and the FUN show. Possibly two or three display cases with Fractional Currency in them. In addition to the material in the cases, we should have applications for membership there. The tables should be staffed during the hours of the show. Our members could hand out flyers, applications and give out information about the material on display or the club itself.

Possibly find out in advance which members would be attending, and see if they could take an hour or two hour shift to staff the table.

I think we all have a great club with a wealth of information to be shared by all and would like to see a substantial increase in new applicants.

If this idea seems feasible please let me know.

and also if there is anything, I can do to help drop me a line or call me at (516) 715-4779.

I will call Mart Delger to see what he thinks and if he is willing to loan us two or three display cases through the Memphis Coin Club.

I am going to display some fractional material at Memphis this year and will be setting up on June 16<sup>th</sup> so if this idea works out I will be able to help anyone at that time

Thanks for your time in this important Club matter.

Very Truly Yours  
Bob #18c

P.S. Benny, please feel free to publish all or part of this letter for the benefit of our membership.

# American Engravers Upon Copper and Steel

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Stauffer's and Fielding's works on American engravers are well indexed for engravers and partly indexed for subjects. However, engravers are for the most part only copyists; they reproduce on copper, steel or stone the work of another. Much valuable information as to the identity of the painters of early portraits can be obtained from examining engraved copies. So, in 1920, Thomas Hovey Gage added an Artist Index to these important volumes.

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